This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Fri Oct 30 7:07:15 2026 / +0000 GMT

Council needs to ?air their positions? on hot dog vendor: CAO

Shelburne Council has put itself in the position of having to ?air? their views on the future of Tony's Street Meat, according to CAO John Telfer.

As The Shelburne Free Press reported last week, Council has so far refused to take a firm position on whether or not a vendor permit will be issued to Tony Finocchio for his hot dog cart, which is situated in front of his store, Tony's Sweet Treats.

The future of the storefront is not in question, but the hot dog cart is another story. A separate permit needs to be issued each year by the Town, but after several years in operation, that was not forthcoming this year and Mr. Telfer says Council has expressed concerns stemming from ?stories on the street.?

?The bottom line is, in Council's opinion, they felt it wasn't the face they want to see or the type of business they want to promote in our downtown, so they just received [the delegation from Mr. Finocchio's lawyer],? said Mr. Telford on Council's decision not to take firm action one way or the other. ?Unfortunately, there wasn't a lot of discussion about it and there wasn't a lot of discussion about it after the last Council meeting?but they did instruct staff to work with our solicitor to come up with [reports] to give some kind of direction to the applicant.?

As we reported last week, a petition spearheaded by Mr. Finocchio was presented to Council with over 700 signatures supporting his business remaining downtown, but Mr. Telfer says as far as the court of public opinion goes, it is a split decision.

?Nothing was expressed by Council and I am reading between the lines,? he says. ?In the same breath, there are some actions that have occurred that wouldn't represent a good corporate vendor downtown in the sense of garbage and stuff like that, but those are minor things. I think the bigger thing is if he is not going to be accepted to run an outside business in the downtown core, what are the reasons for it? I will let Council make those reasonings so it is in the public domain.

?I think Council has kind of put itself in the position where they are going to have to air their position on this one simply because their first direction to receive it was not good enough to give the applicant any indication on why. If it doesn't happen, I am sure he will want to take it to a judicial court.?

And that is exactly what Mr. Finocchio says he plans to do should Council not vote in his favour.

?There are people who don't like me for some reason,? Mr. Finocchio tells the Shelburne Free Press. ?I will just wait until it goes to Council and then I will see what happens. If I don't get my license back, I am going to take it to a higher court. I am going to sue. I have lost a lot of money here. I have paid my rent all year and I haven't done anything wrong. How would you like it if someone came up to you and said, ?We're going to take your license away?' I feel really bad right now, but I am not judging anybody or saying anything bad to anybody. I think there is a misunderstanding or somebody has something against me, or they just don't want me to be there.?

Asked to elaborate on some of the complaints he is aware of, he says he has asked people to leave the benches outside of his store and surrounding his food cart if they sit there with pizza and other snacks bought from other businesses. But, he contends, he asks them to leave ?nicely.?

I don't want people eating there and walking through my place with pizza or anything,? he says. ?I pay to be on that property and I don't appreciate that people do that ? and I don't get aggressive. All I can say is I didn't do anything. I would like to say sorry to everybody if I did something. I want to thank all the people of Shelburne who are supporting me. That's what I want to do. I really have no apologies because I didn't do anything. I stand up for myself and I am allowed to do that.

?I am a unique person with a unique personality. That is who I am. Everybody has a unique personality out there.?

By Brock Weir